
ABSTRACT

5 The present invention is a service provider/customer matching system designed to provide customers with real-time indication of each service provider's state of availability and telephony connectivity. In a preferred embodiment, the invention includes a web site, which stores, updates, and displays service provider information. A customer would, upon accessing this web site, conduct a search for a particular type of service provider and be able to tell

10 immediately if one or more service providers matching the search criteria were available at that moment to provide services. After the customer selected a service provider, the customer would have the option of viewing more detailed information about the service provider, sending a message to the service provider if the service provider is not immediately available, or initiating a telephone conversation with the service provider if he or she is on call and available. While the
15 call is taking place, the customer would accrue charges on a per minute basis. The service provider would later receive all or part of the accrued charges for that call.
